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STEPHEN HANSON  
42½ Hasell Street • Charleston, SC 29401

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SC PUBLIC SERVICE  
COMMISSION

August 24, 2020

Public Service Commission of South Carolina  
101 Executive Center Drive, Suite 100  
Columbia, SC 29210

Dear Sir/Madam:

I want to protest Duke Energy's request for a rate increase to cover the costs of not shutting off power to customers due to the coronavirus. The company estimates these costs at \$5.5 million for late fees that were waived and \$2.4 million in missed payments. Total: \$7.9 million.

If customers have returned to work, Duke should make every effort to fairly collect what is owed. They should work with their customers to determine a repayment plan that works with the consumers' budgets and let them pay the money back. However, to ask other Duke customers to cover this expense is neither reasonable nor appropriate. I protest to this proposed rate increase as setting a terrible precedent.

Duke has a market capitalization of \$60 billion and last year paid out \$2.6 billion in dividends. It would seem, in these unprecedented times, when Duke's customers did NOTHING to create the economic hardship they are now enduring, the company should write off whatever the customers cannot repay. Even a write off of the entire \$7.9 million, spread over all of Duke's shareholders, would reduce the amount of the dividend by pennies.

Why is Duke Energy immune to economic hardship? If we're all in this together, let's all share the pain together.

  
Stephen Hanson